

# Behavioral Interview Questions to Ask Candidates<sup>1</sup>

While a job applicant's resume may share a wealth of information about their professional history, skills and experience, this information alone isn't enough to make a hiring decision. To ensure a candidate is a right fit for a role, you'll need to learn about their work style, habits and how they make decisions on the job. This is why it's vital to perform a behavioral interview.

A behavioral interview uses strategic questions that ask candidates to share how they've overcome previous professional challenges, reached success and navigated difficult decisions. By learning more about a candidate's past behaviors, you can predict how they'd perform in the future.

To help you gather the critical information you need in your hiring process, here are 10 of the most common behavioral interview questions as well as information about why they're important.

## 10 Top Behavioral Interview Questions

1. **Can you give me an example of a difficult problem you solved at work? How did you go about reaching a solution?**

Problem-solving is an essential skill for any profession or industry and learning how a candidate applies this skill can help identify whether they're prepared to handle the types of challenges they'll face working for your organization. Asking this question gives the candidate an opportunity to walk you through their process for recognizing a problem and developing a solution.

2. **Tell me about a time when you made a mistake. How did you handle this experience?**

Everyone makes mistakes at some point in their career, and how candidates deal with their errors can tell you a lot about their humility and personal accountability. When a candidate answers this question, consider whether they took responsibility for their actions and whether they discuss what they've learned from their mistake to ensure it doesn't happen again.

3. **Please share a time when you faced an unexpected challenge. How did you overcome this challenge?**

This question is essential for understanding what sorts of challenges a candidate has encountered and how they transformed an obstacle into an achievement. A candidate's response should give you insight into their flexibility and how they react to unforeseen circumstances either at work or in other aspects of their life. Because you can't always anticipate problems at work, it's important to have employees who can quickly shift their attention and reprioritize tasks to meet company needs.

4. **Tell me about a time when you had to develop a new skill? How do you approach the learning process?**

It's important to hire people who recognize the importance of skill-building and seek to grow their knowledge and abilities throughout their career. Asking this question gives the candidate a chance to explain the tactics they use to pick up and retain new information. Learning about how professionals go about the learning process can also help you identify whether your organization's training and education align with a candidate's needs.

5. **Please share a time when you had to share or pitch an idea to someone in a more senior position. How did you go about this task and what was the outcome?**

This question is essential for evaluating a candidate's confidence, persuasiveness and communication skills. While these skills are crucial for every professional, it's especially important for roles in sales, customer service, client relations or management.

- 6. Tell me about a time when you experienced conflict at work. How did you overcome it?**

When a team is under stress or when people hold differing opinions, it can sometimes lead to a dispute. Asking this question helps you better understand how a candidate might behave when tensions rise or an argument ensues. How a candidate handles these types of conflicts provides insight into their self-management, temperament, interpersonal communication skills and professionalism.
- 7. What's one thing you've done in your professional history that you wish you would have handled differently?**

Many interview questions focus on a candidate's best traits and professional accomplishments, but you can also learn a lot about a professional based on their past failures or opportunities they missed. Asking this question gives the candidate an opportunity to demonstrate their self-awareness, ability to learn from past experiences and dedication to self-improvement.
- 8. Tell me about a time when you were under a lot of stress. How did you handle this pressure?**

Stress is often an unavoidable aspect of any position, but it's crucial to learn how candidates react to workplace stressors before you make your hiring decision. By asking this question, you can determine whether an interviewee is prepared to manage the types of pressures they may face in this position, and how well they're equipped to perform their job in a variety of stress-inducing conditions, such as when the team is understaffed, or a timeline is reduced.
- 9. Please share a time when you set a goal for yourself and achieved it.**

A candidate who sets their own goals and adheres to their plan is typically ambitious, dedicated and determined. Goal-setting is also indicative of well-developed organizational skills and an interest in career advancement. Asking this question gives the candidate a chance to outline their process for setting goals and reaching objectives, and helps you better understand what motivates them to do well.
- 10. Tell me about your proudest professional accomplishment and why this achievement is significant to you.**

Asking candidates about their accomplishments is helpful for a few reasons. First of all, it gives the interviewee a chance to discuss how they've applied their skills to reach success. Second, it gives you insight into the sorts of projects they find meaningful and fulfilling. Third, it helps you assess whether they can share their wins while remaining humble and gracious. Consider whether they mention how their achievement provided value, who else was involved in the project and what they learned from the experience.

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<sup>1</sup> Indeed for Employers: Hiring Resources

[https://www.indeed.com/hire/c/info/behavioral-interview-questions-to-ask-candidates?aceid=&qclid=EAlaIqobChMlhJPIr\\_mv7AIVh5WzCh3a4glxEAAAYASAAEgJ1g\\_D\\_BwE](https://www.indeed.com/hire/c/info/behavioral-interview-questions-to-ask-candidates?aceid=&qclid=EAlaIqobChMlhJPIr_mv7AIVh5WzCh3a4glxEAAAYASAAEgJ1g_D_BwE)